

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7877

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4809

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PO, OVIP

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT BY SECRETARY TO LISBON

REF: STATE 175574

1. HAVE EXPLORED POSSIBLE VISIT BY SECRETARY WITH BOTH SOARES AND SECRETARY OF STATE MEDEIROS FERREIRA, THE LIKELY FOMIN IN SOARES' GOVERNMENT. AT MY INSTRUCTIONS ARMA ALSO DISCUSSED WITH STAFF AIDE TO EANES. ALL WELCOMED IDEA OF VISIT. SOARES, WHO WAS PARTICULARLY ENTHUSIASTIC, THOUGHT TIMING WOULD BE EXCELLENT PROVIDING HIS GOVERNMENT WAS INSTALLED. HE REPEATED AS I LEFT HIM THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE IN PLACE.

2. MEDEIROS FERREIRA THOUGHT VISIT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE FROM POLICY VIEWPOINT. HE WONDERED IF SLIGHTLY LATER DATE MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO ENSURE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN PLACE. HE DOUBTED SOCIALISTS COULD MAKE IT BY FIRST WEEK IN AUGUST. I TOLD HIM PROPOSED VISIT WAS STILL TENTATIVE BUT SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE WAS VERY BUSY AND I DID NOT KNOW IF IT WAS FEASIBLE TO CONSIDER LATER DATE.

3. AS BEST WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS, WHICH IS STILL THE SUBJECT OF SOME CONTROVERSY, THE GOVERNMENT HAS 10 DAYS AFTER THE NOMINATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRESENT ITS PROGRAM. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE A 3 DAY PERIOD FOR PRINTING AND STUDY FOLLOWING WHICH THE ASSEMBLY

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HAS 5 DAYS TO REJECT PROGRAM. IF SOARES IS NAMED PM ON

MONDAY AND THE MAXIMUM TIMES ARE UTILIZED IT IS POSSIBLE
THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE IN PLACE. ON OTHER HAND
IT SEEMS LIKELY SOCIALISTS WILL PRESENT THEIR PROGRAM IN
LESS THAN 10 DAYS, PROBABLY RIGHT AFTER SOARES'S
NOMINATION. THUS ODDS ARE IN FAVOR OF GOVERNMENT BEING IN
OFFICE BY PROPOSED DATES. I RECOMMEND WE PROCEED WITH
VISIT FOR PLANNING PURPOSES BUT BE PREPARED TO CANCEL IF
SOCIALISTS FOR ONE REASON OR OTHER DRAG FEET IN PRESENTING PROGRAM.
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